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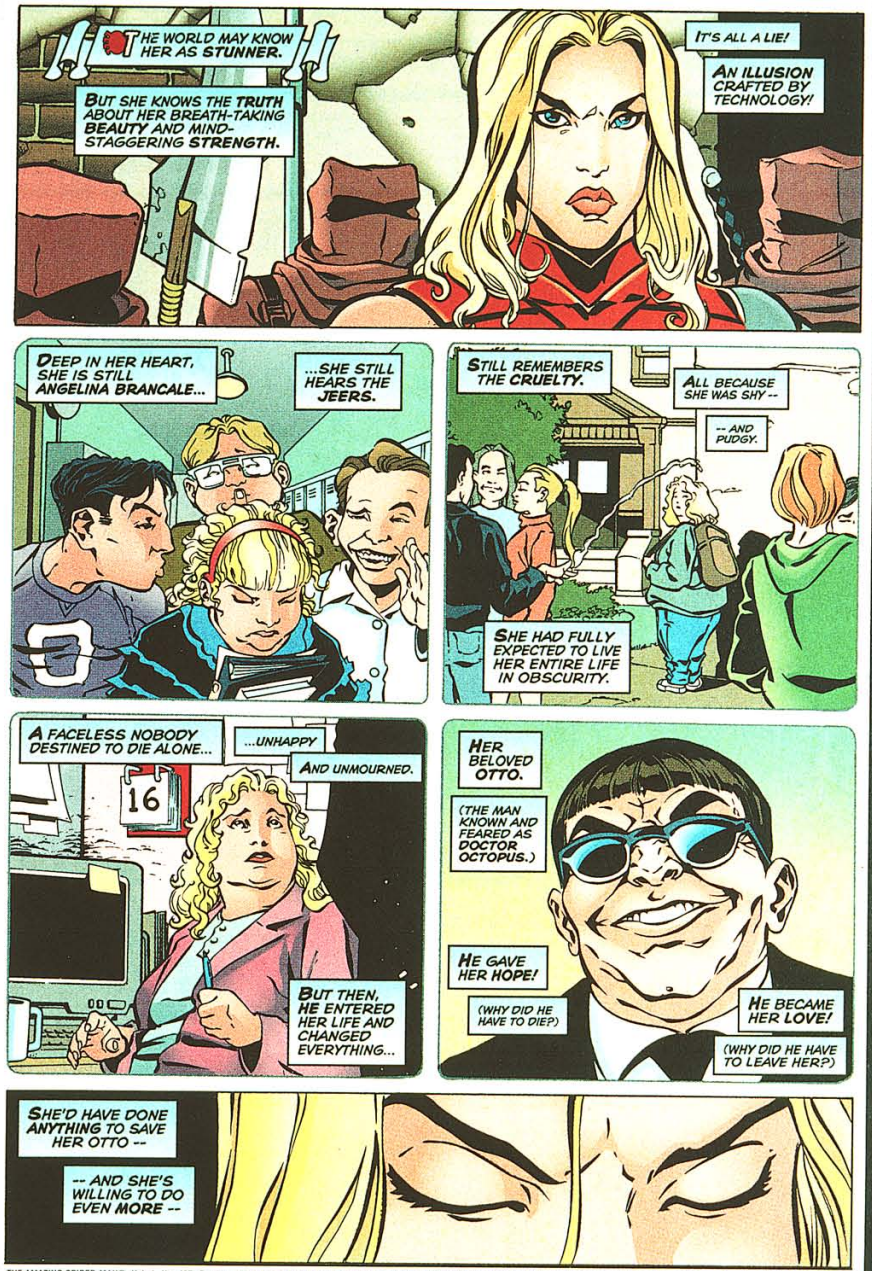

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HEY, IT'S THE EVER-AMAZING

SPIDER-MAN!

A true hero at heart, Spider-Man has dedicated his life to preventing injustices against the innocent.

Meet Peter Parker, once a brilliant, though meek high school student, orphaned as a child and reared by his doting Uncle Ben and Aunt May. At a science fair, Peter was bitten by an irradiated spider and gained the proportionate strength, speed, agility and early warning "spider sense" of that arachnid. He used these powers for personal fame and fortune as a masked Spider-Man. But when Peter failed to stop a criminal who later killed his beloved Uncle Ben, the youth's costumed identity took on a far deeper significance. He realized that with great power there must also come great responsibility. So Peter Parker became the wall-crawling nemesis of the criminal element, a young man determined to atone for the tragic death of his uncle — The Amazing Spider-Man!

MARY JANE WATSON-PARKER

The wife of Peter Parker/Spider-Man, and his closest confidant. She has currently returned to Empire State University as a student majoring in psychology.

THE ROSE

A criminal mastermind whose face is hidden behind a mask, thus, his identity is a secret from all. The Rose's chief goal is the consolidation of New York's underworld behind him and the elimination of Spider-Man as a threat to his power.

DELILAH

The Rose's primary enforcer, she is a super-powered woman who has been set on the trail of Spider-Man several times, though she has failed to destroy him.

DOCTOR REANDEAU

A therapist on the Empire State University campus who currently is treating Peter Parker and wife Mary Jane.

ALISON MONGRAIN

A woman in the employ of Norman Osborn, the Green Goblin, who recently aided him in his long-planned revenge on Peter Parker.

DOCTOR OCTOPUS

Otto Octavius was a researcher in atomic physics who had designed and built a chest harness with four artificial arms attached that allowed him to manipulate radioactive substances from a distance. A freak accident bonded the harness to his skin and affected his mind which then turned toward criminal enterprise. Doctor Octopus is one of the web-spinner's earliest enemies who has been thwarted time and again by Spider-Man.

DOCTOR OCTOPUS II

Carolyn Trainer was a protégé of Otto Octavius who assumed his name and modus operandi following Octavius' demise.

STUNNER

A virtual reality construct possessing super-human strength and endurance. She was the lover of Otto Octavius just before his death. Stunner has taken in the hatred of Spider-Man felt by Octavius.

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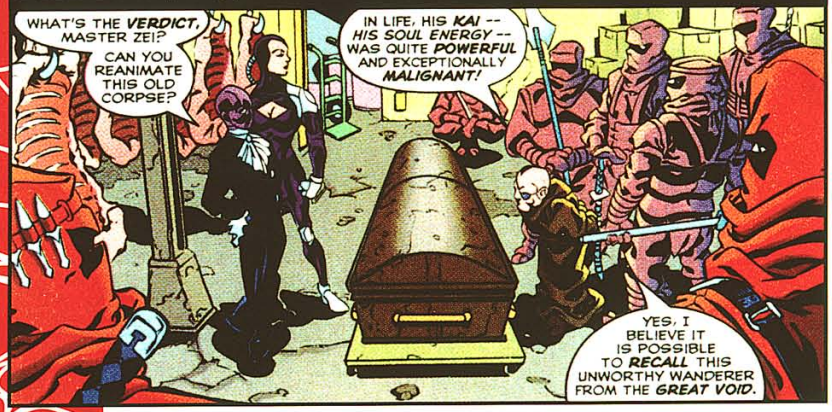
PREVIOUSLY IN THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®

The criminal mastermind called the Rose had the body of Otto Octavius stolen from its grave in Cypress Hills Cemetery by members of a group of Asian assassins called the Hand, and taken to a Manhattan meat packing plant.



Spider-Man criss-crossed the city seeking information on his old enemy's whereabouts...

...eventually tracking it to the plant where he was overwhelmed by henchmen of the Rose and agents of the Hand.

Now Spidey is strapped to a table next to the late Doctor Octopus where his very life-force is to be used to reanimate the body through a Hand ritual.

Design by COMICRAFT's John Marasigan

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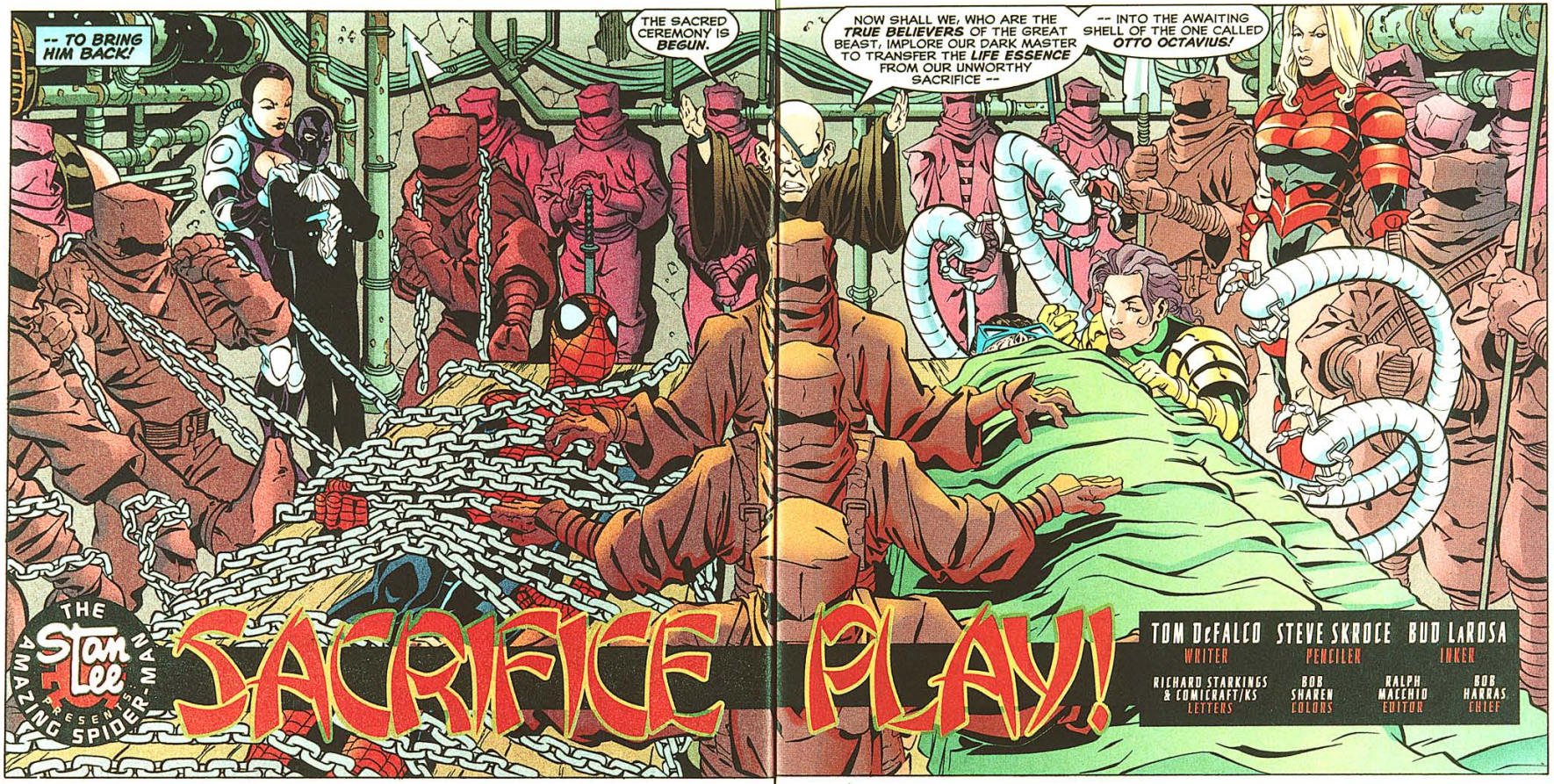

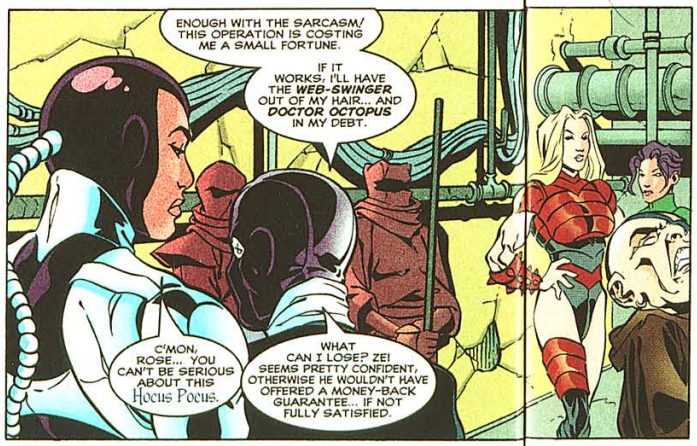

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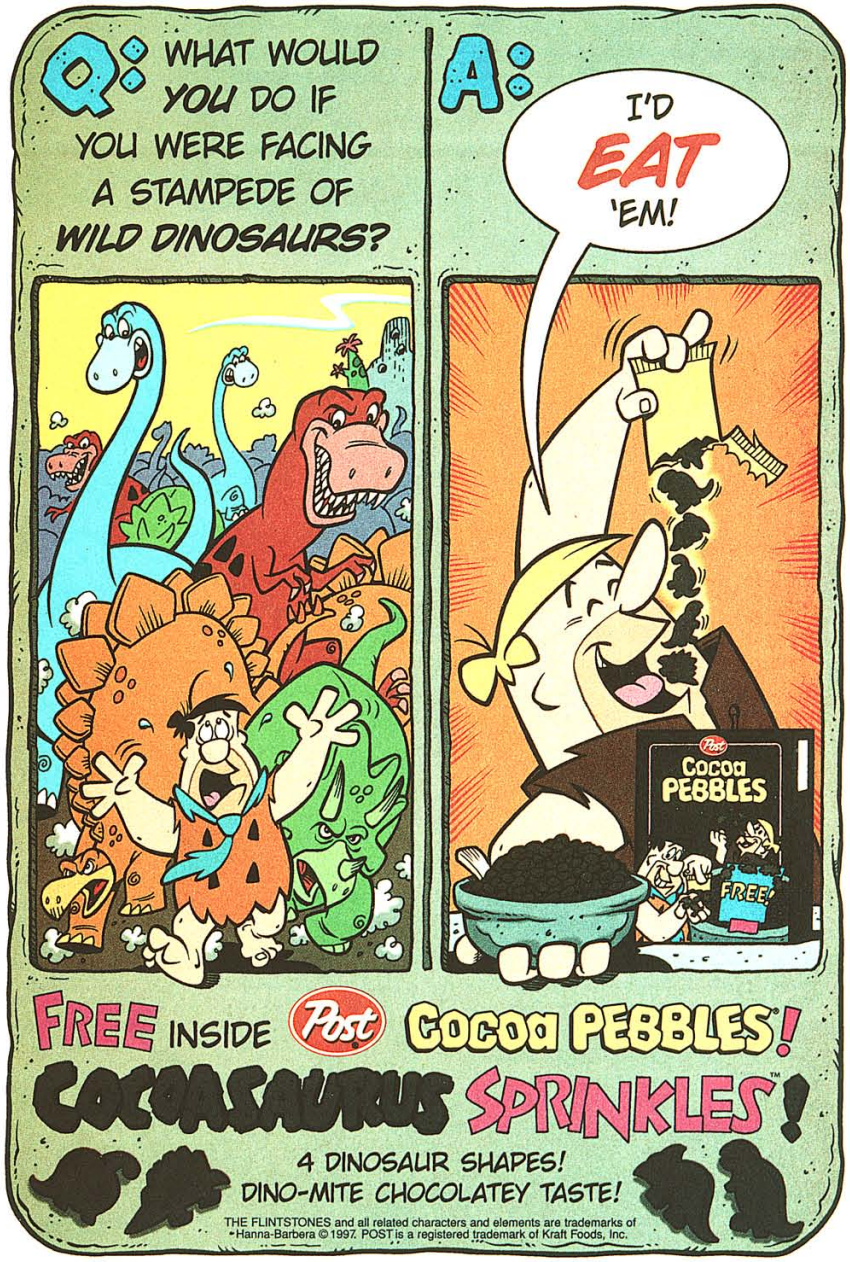

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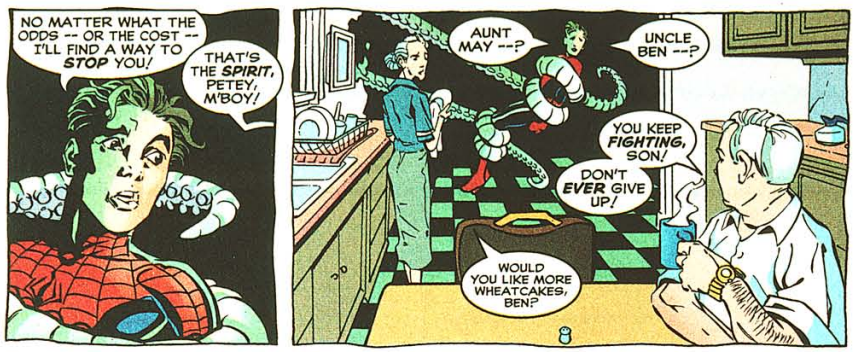

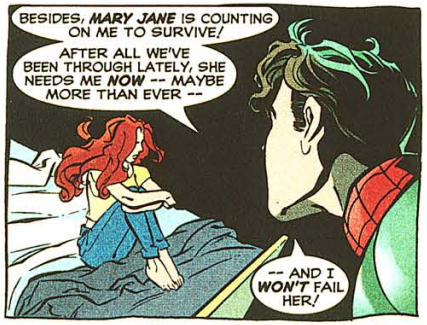

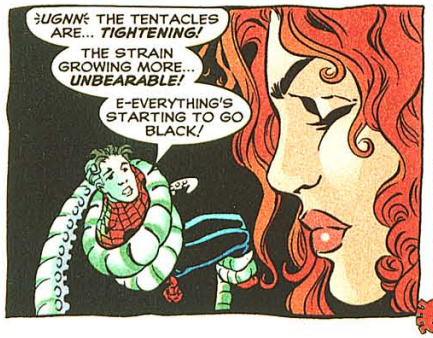

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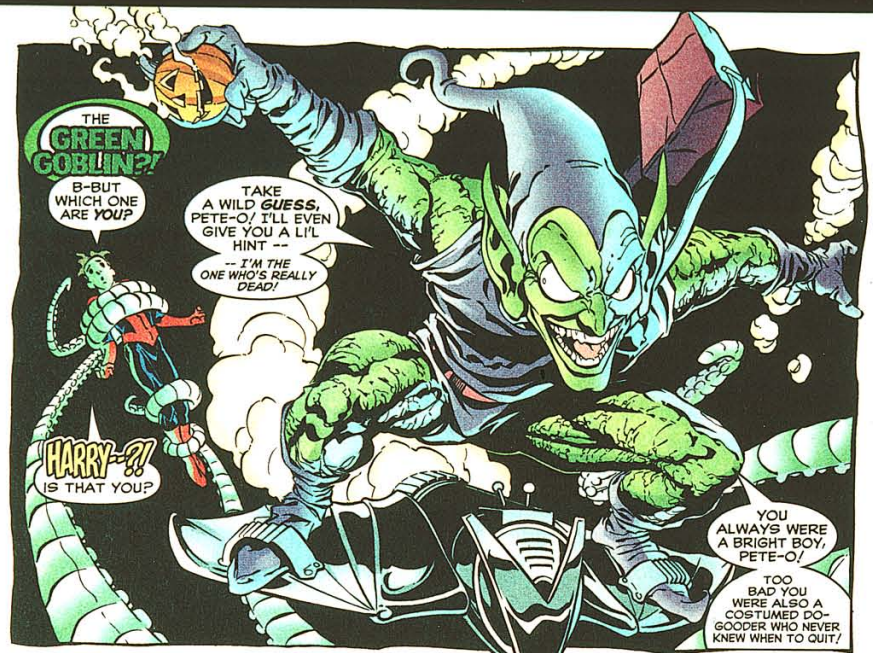

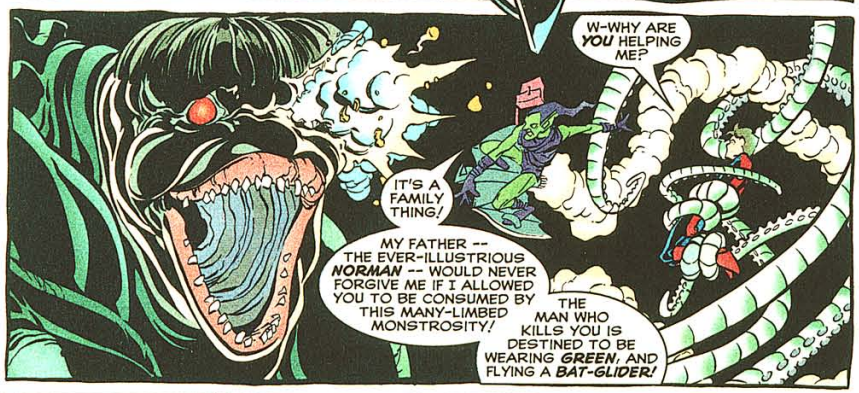

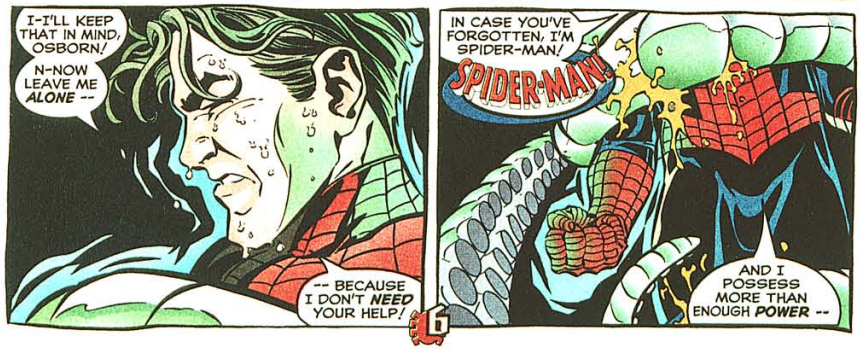

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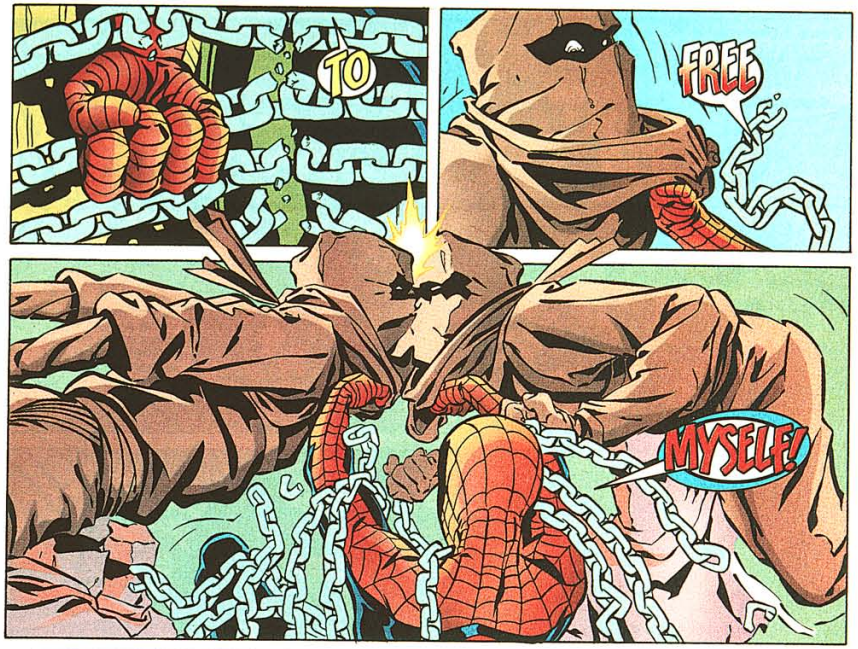

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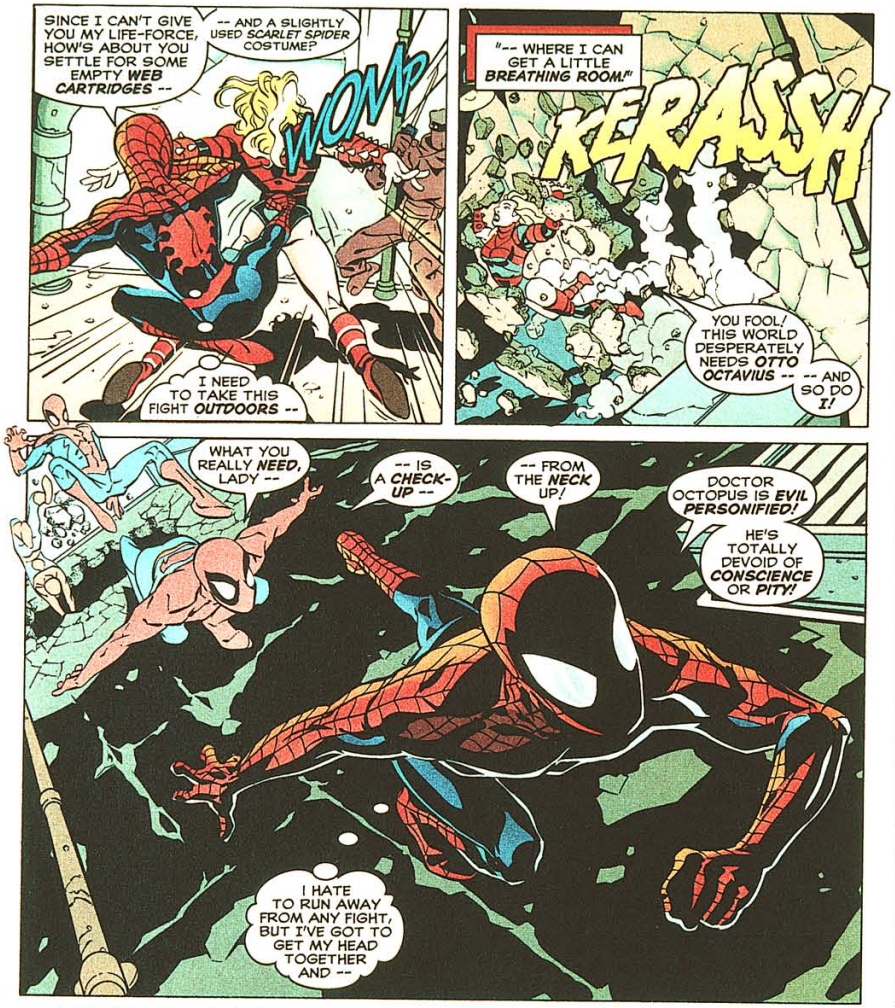

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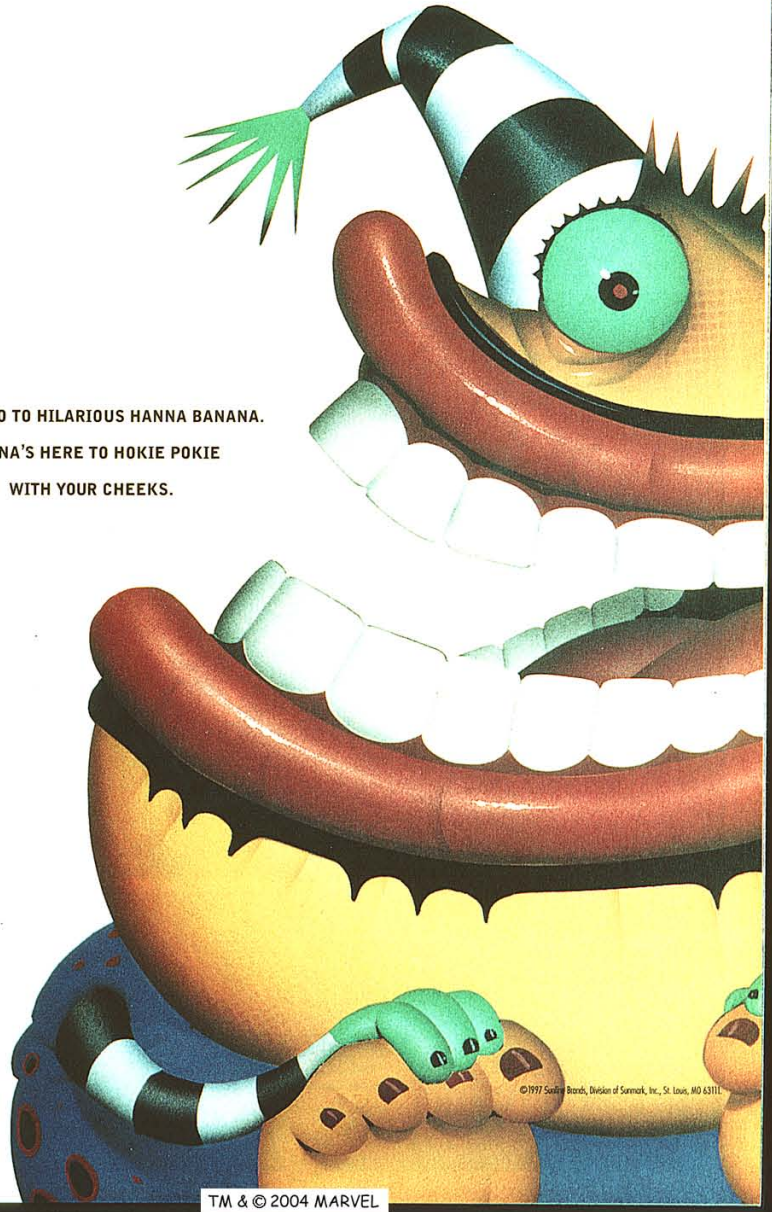

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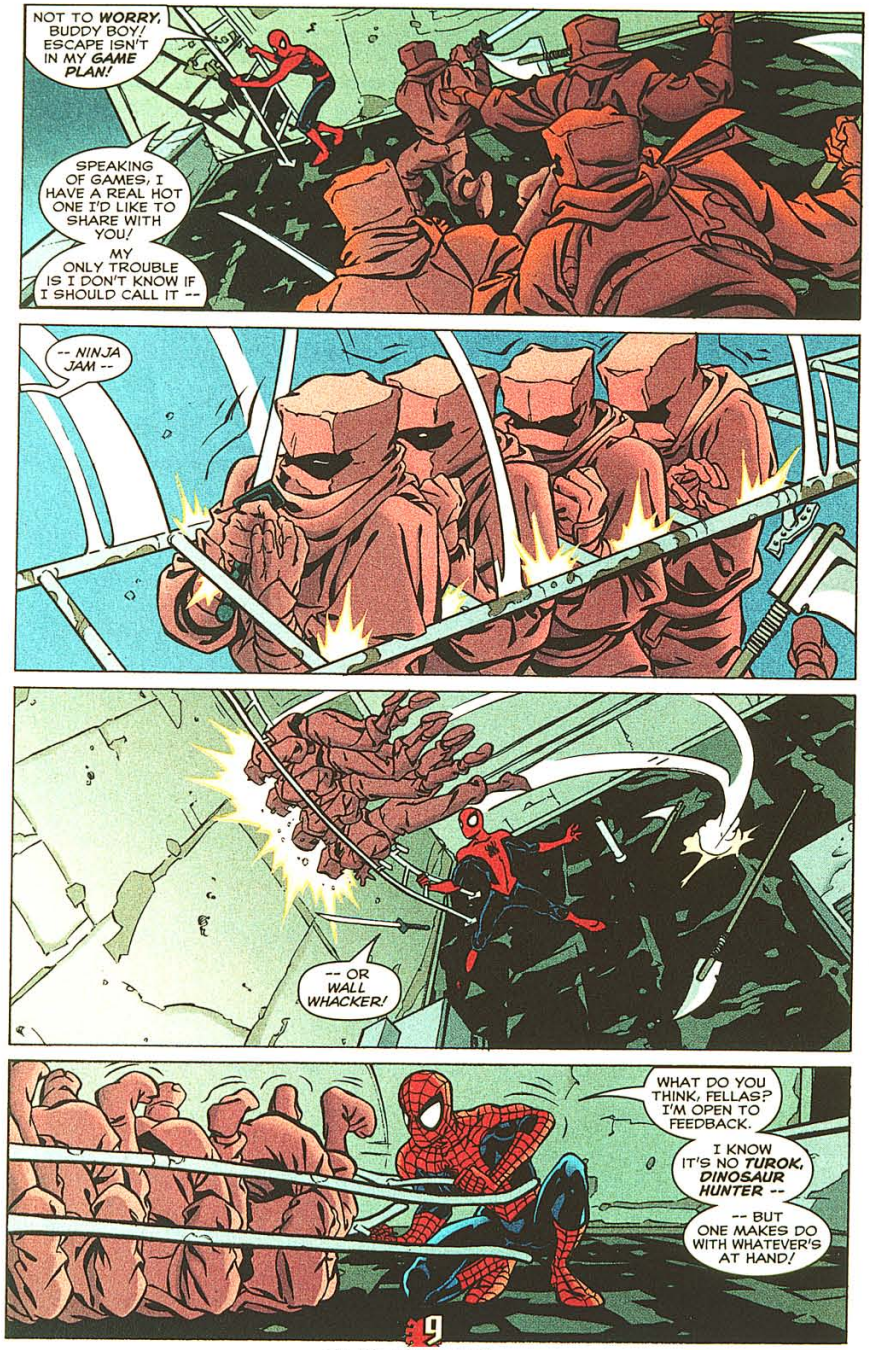

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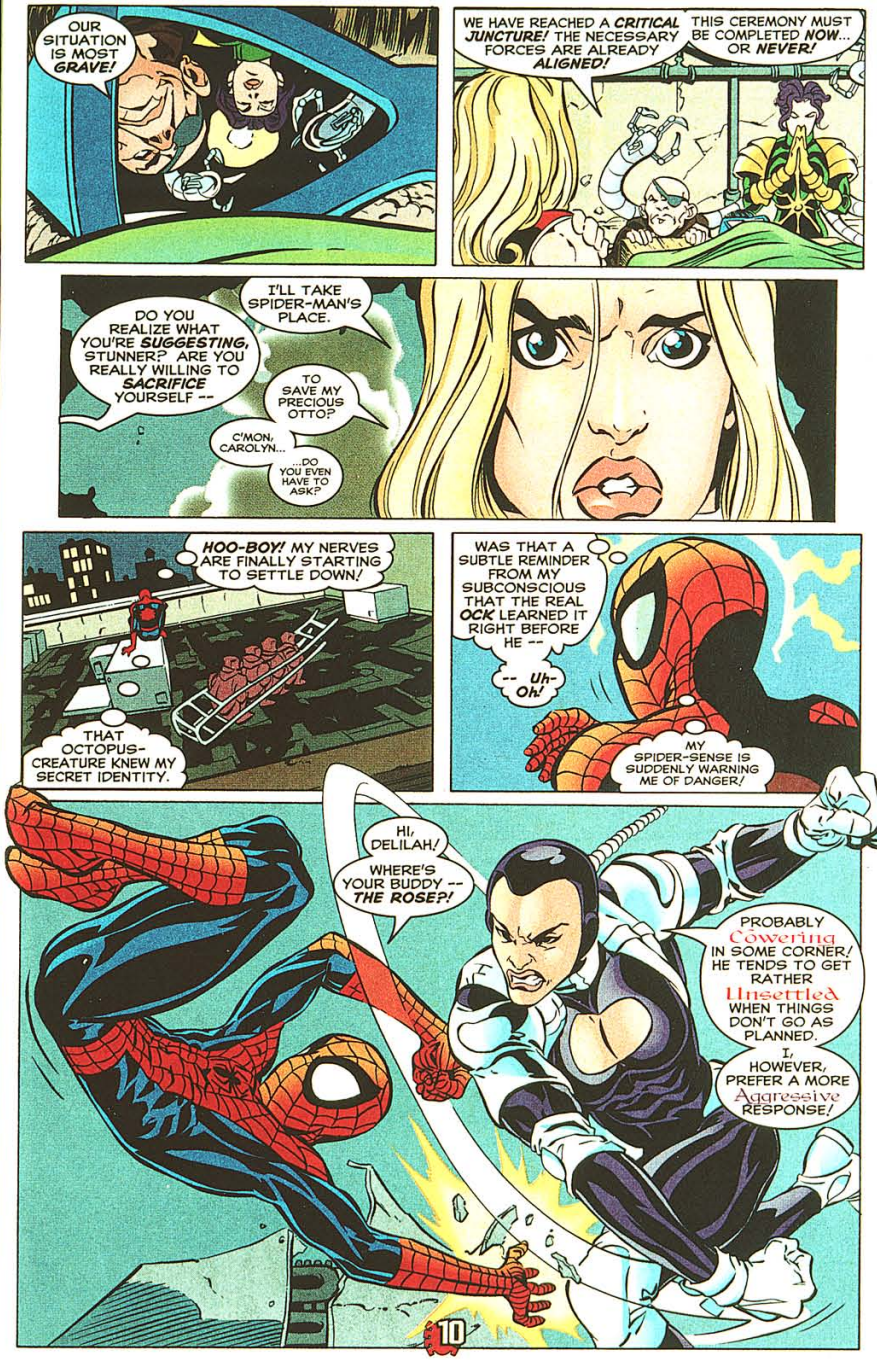

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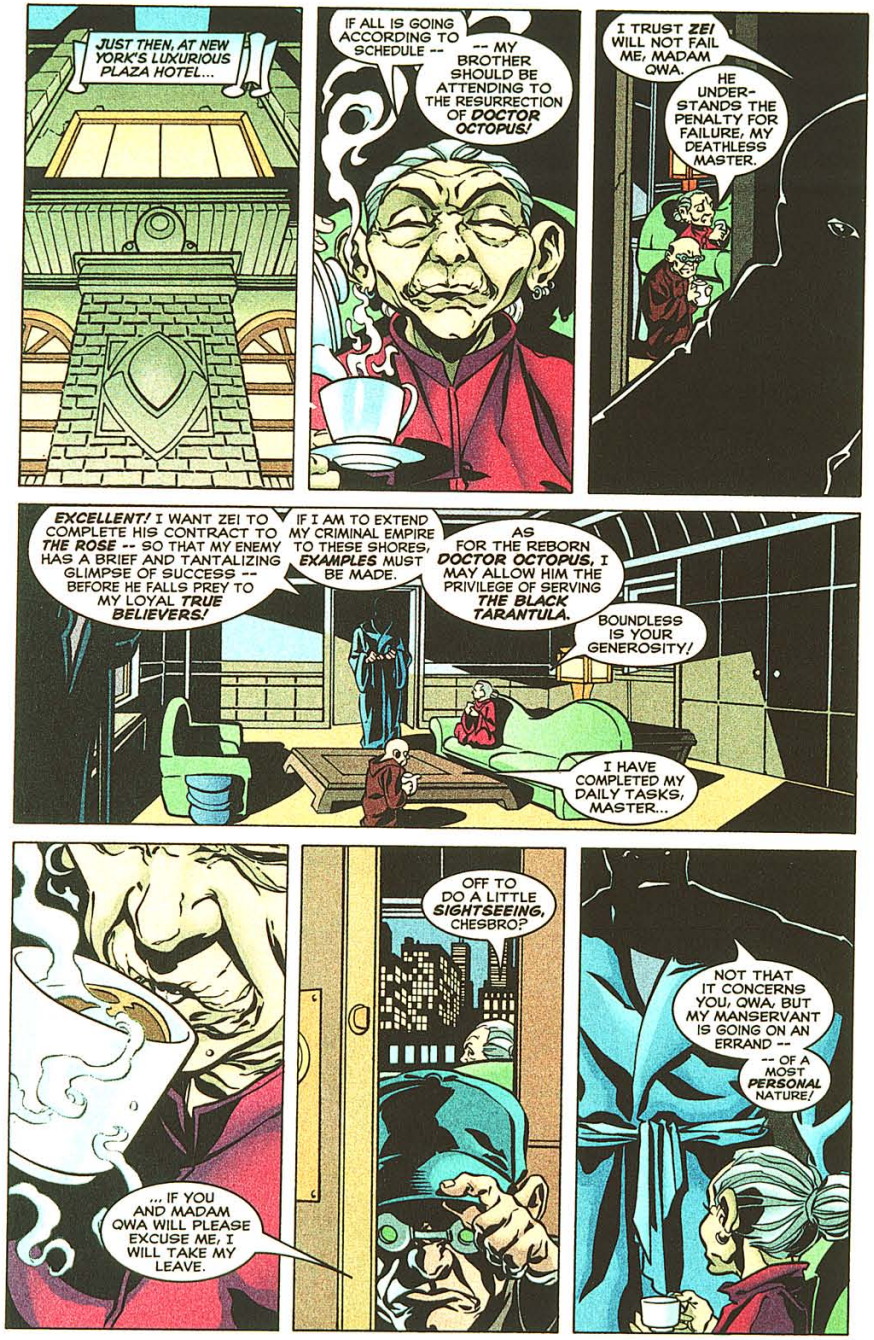

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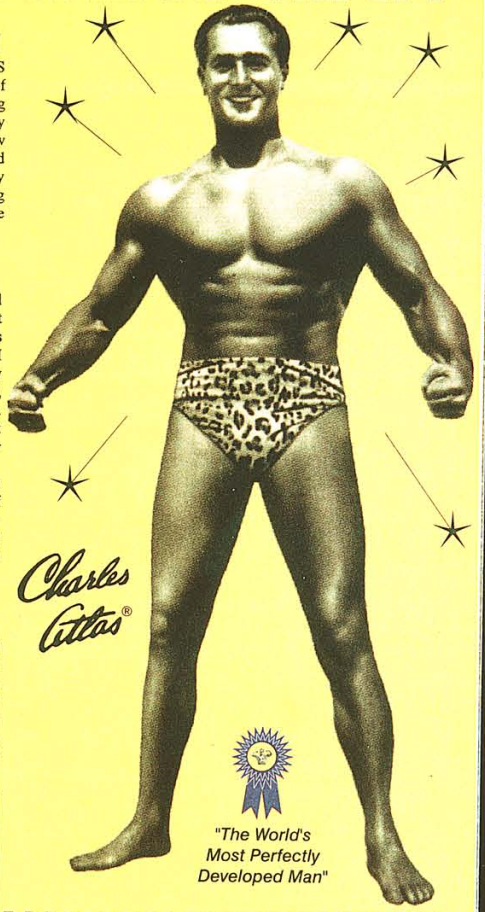

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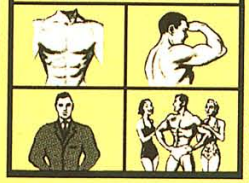

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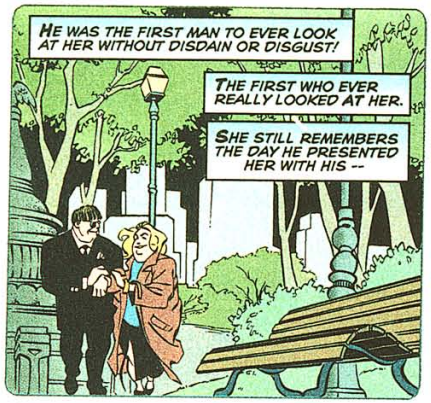

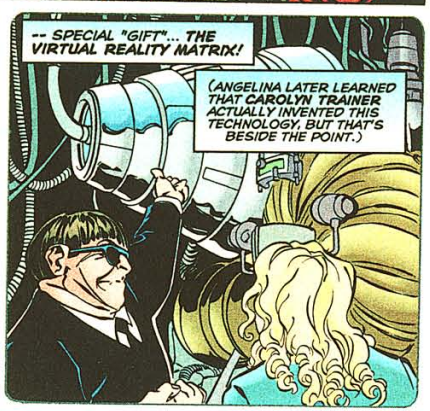

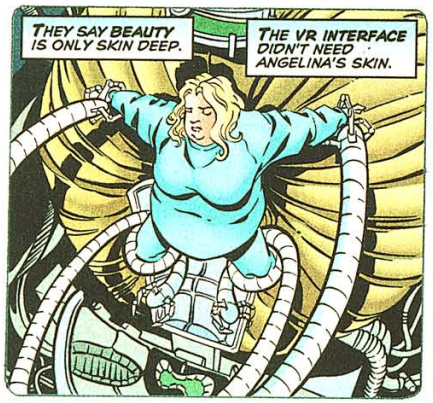

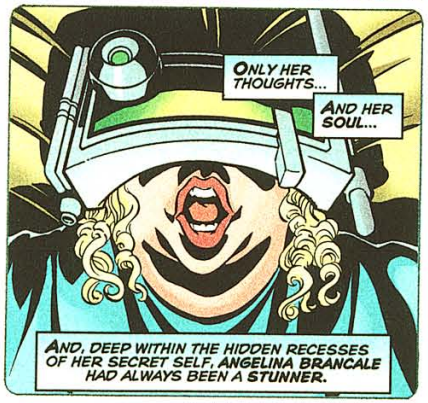

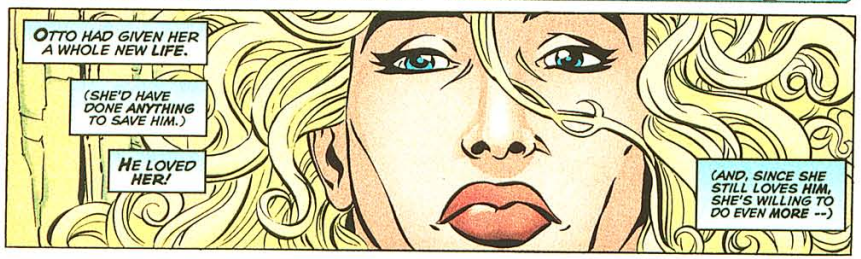

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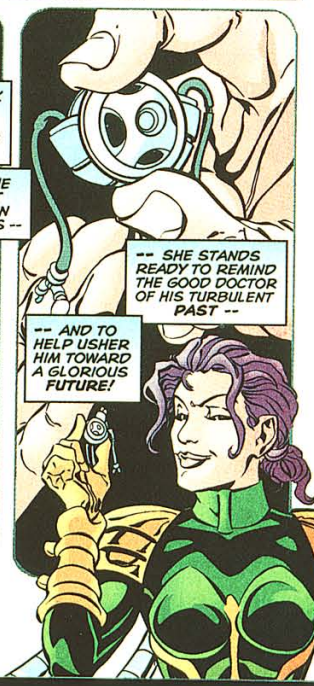

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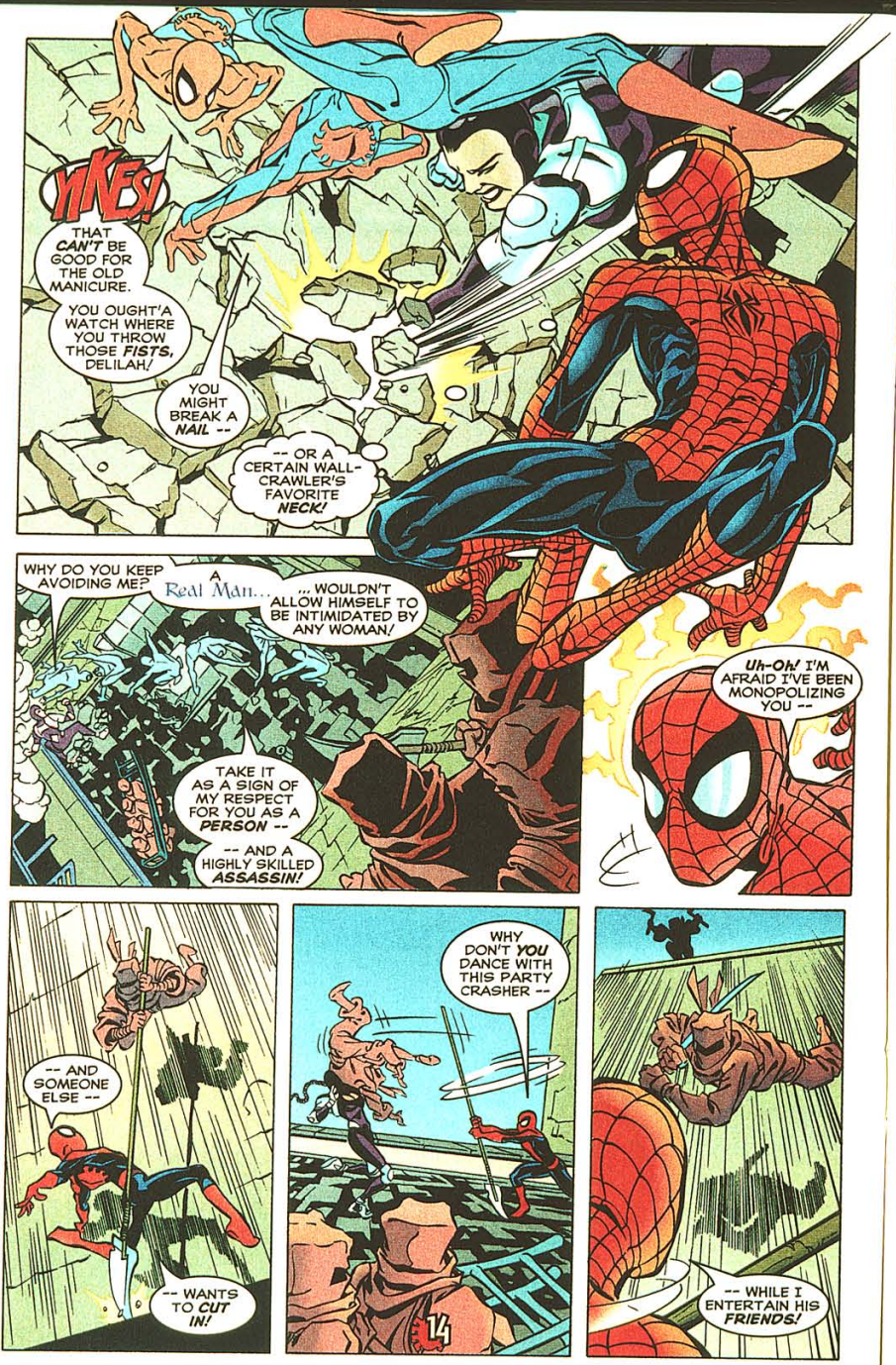

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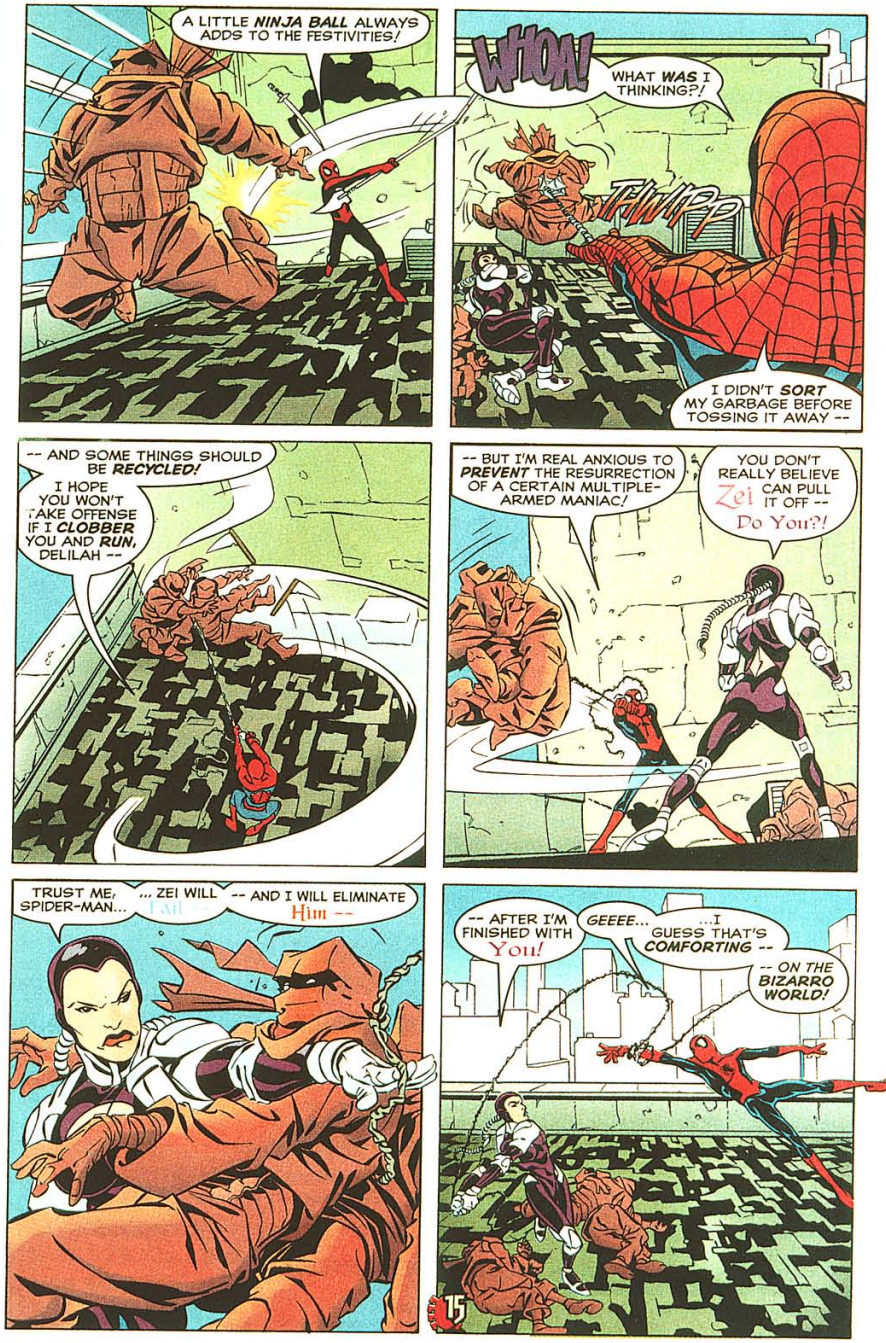

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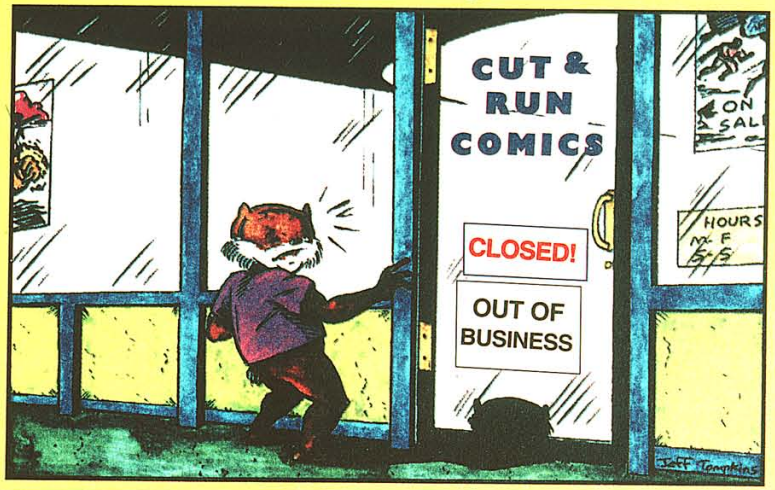

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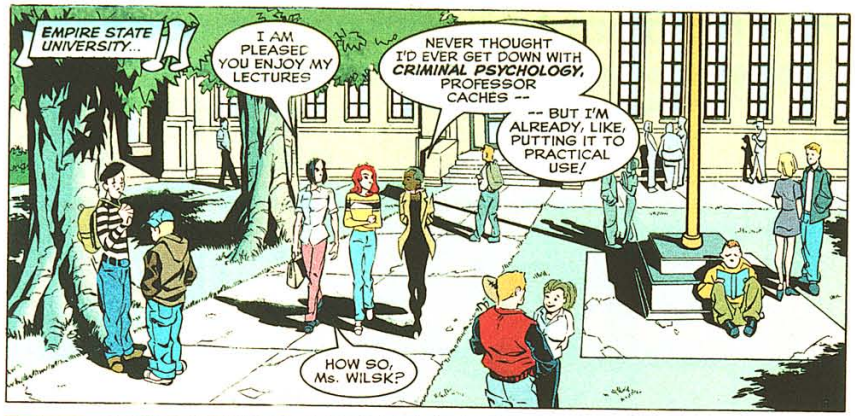

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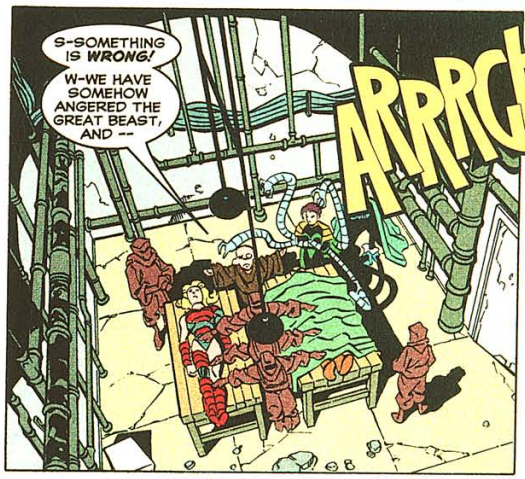

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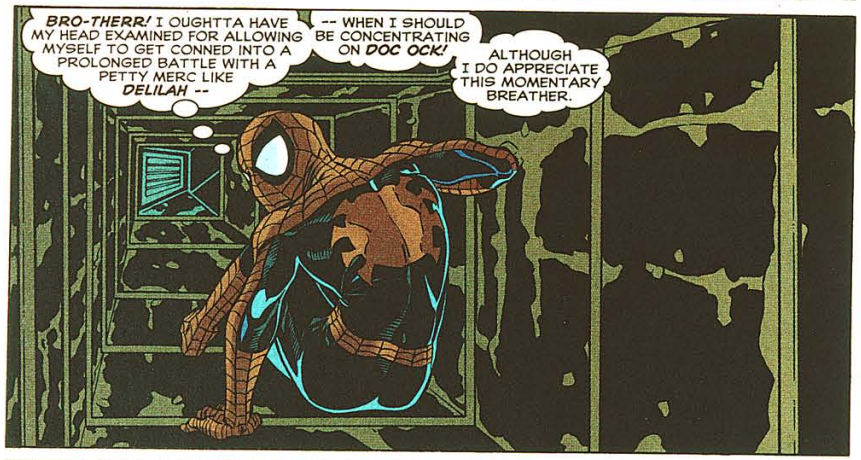

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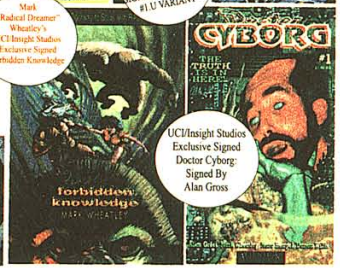

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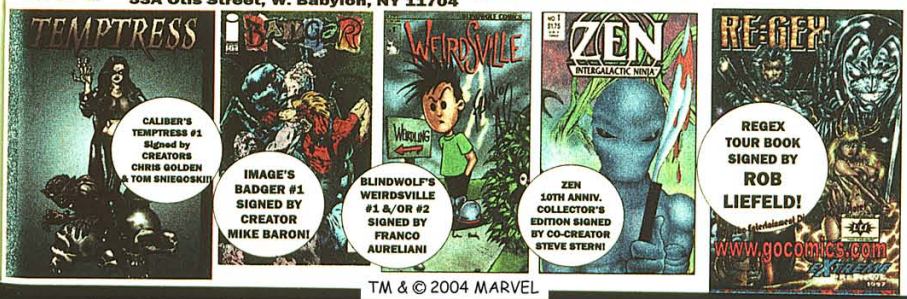

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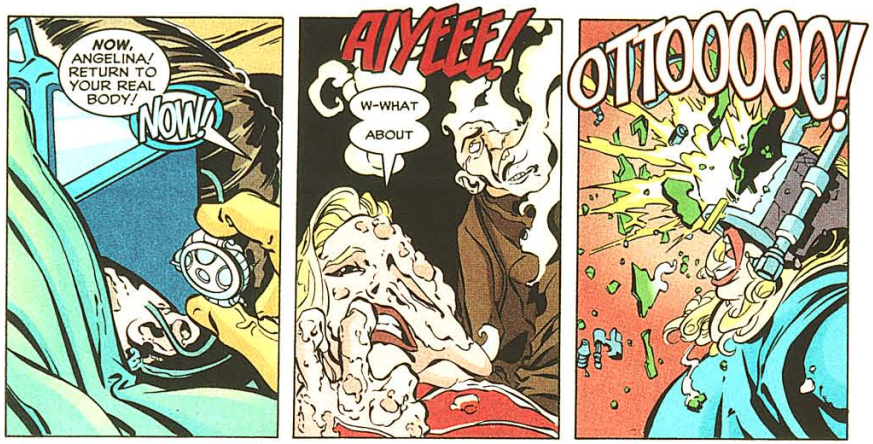

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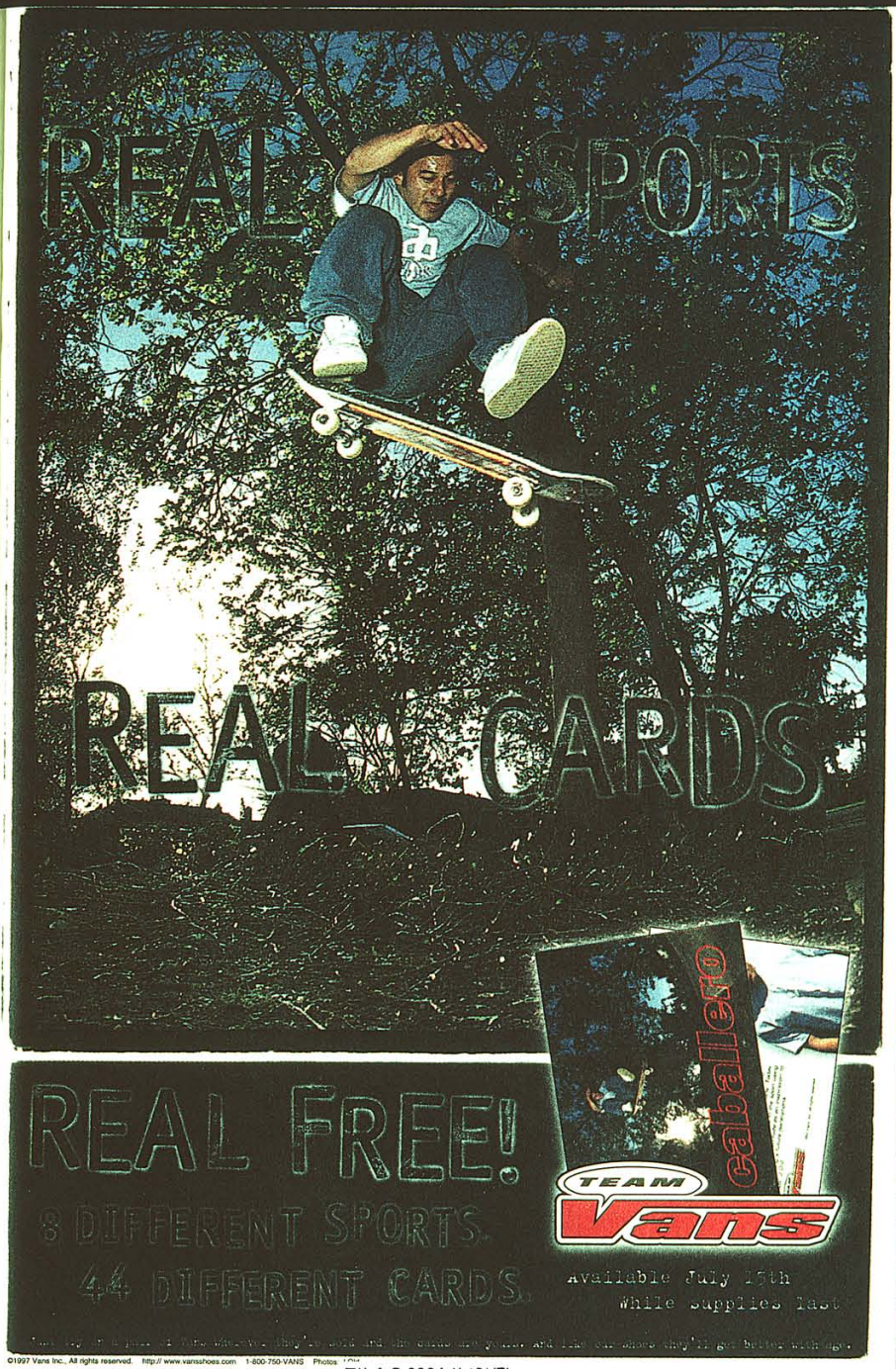

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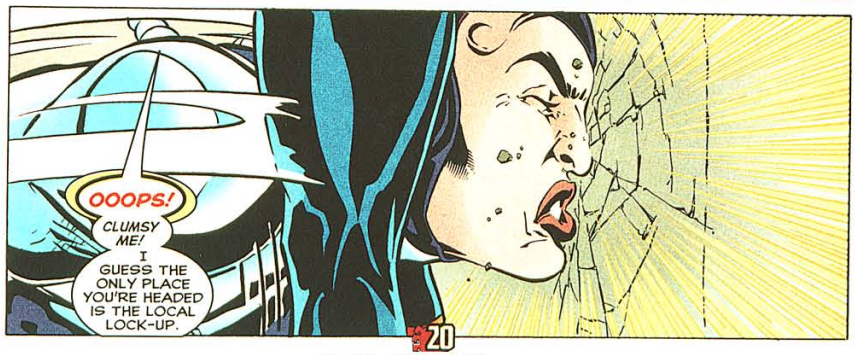

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I ACHE IN PLACES I'D RATHER NOT THINK ABOUT.
I JUST HOPE SHE'S OUT FOR THE --
AW, NO!
T-THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING--!
I-IT CAN'T BE --
"-- HIM?!"
WHAT'S THE MATTER, SPIDER-MAN?
HAVE YOU NO WITTY REMARK -- NO CORDIAL WORD OF GREETING -- FOR AN OLD FRIEND?
AREN'T YOU HAPPY TO SEE DOCTOR OCTOPUS?
TO BE CONTINUED!
'NUFF SAID!
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THE SPIDER'S WEB

HEY, ***Hope you all enjoyed our spiffy double gatefold cover this month, commemorating the return of the one and only Doctor Octopus! In case you couldn't make out the teeny little signatures on the cover, they break down like this:***

The main cover was masterfully produced by our regular art team of Steve Skroce and Bud LaRosa; the inside gatefold of Doc's "evil eye" was rendered by none other than the living legend himself, John Romita Sr.; and the double spread that graces the rear of this masterpiece was drawn up from the muck by John Romita, Jr. and Klaus Janson!

So there you have it: three-and-one half covers for only a bit of extra change!

Dear Web-weavers,

Lately there have been an awful lot of revamps going on, some good (Carrion, Ghost Rider, Hobgoblin, Kingpin, the Fantastic Four), some okay (the Avengers, Wolverine), and some downright awful (the character formerly known as Superman). Aside from the Hobgoblin, though, none of these was more necessary than Electro's. Max has always been an outstanding character, but I never felt his full potential was reached.

Speaking of shocking transformations, is Spidey in the midst of a six-arm relapse? If memory serves, migraine head-aches and Michael Morbius were involved the last time Peter had the extra appendages. I hope this is the case... the Six-Arm Saga s one of my all-time favorite stories, and I'd love to see a sequel.

On a more tragic note, I must admit that my health is being seriously impacted by Steve Skroce's sabbatical. I don't know how much longer I can live without my monthly fix of his artwork. Although Joe Bennett's art is excellent, nobody does it like Steve. I... oh, no... vision blurring... Steve... hurry....

James Dysart
207 North 800 East
Provo, UT 84606

James...James...are you still there? Oh, no! We've lost him! Oh, wait, there he is! Phew! Looks like issue #425 must have made it to you just in the nick of time. One more Steve-less issue and we might have had a wrongful death lawsuit on our hands!

Dear Web-heads,

Thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you for bringing back Electro!!!

Max Dillon has to be the greatest of the classic Lee/Ditko villains. I'd suppose all other "energy" villains have been modeled after him. It was good to see his complete origin and his return to the criminal circuit. Good job! I thought we'd seen the last of him in "Light the Night!"

I am also glad to see that the baby is all right. Obviously, this is coming toward a big storyline (I know the baby will be fine...killing children violates the Comics Code).

Does the return of Phil Urich mean that we'll hear from his giggling alter-ego? What I'd like to see is the "good" Goblin take on the evil Goblin one-on-one! Osborn versus Urich...that would be something!

The only part I didn't like about AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #422 is the possibility that you're going to kill Robbie. Please don't. I'm sure everybody has a thing for Joe ever since the Tombstone storyline some years ago. And don't kill any of the Stacy family, either—I have a feeling you might.

A few requests:

1. I agree with Travis and Anton...bring back Stunner!

2. I'd also like to see the return of some of Spidey's lesser-known foes, like Skinhead, Knight and Fogg, Carlos Lobo, Slyde, Styx and Stone, and Facade.

3. Guest heroes I'd like to see include Wolverine, Storm, Rocket Racer, and Nightwatch (I refuse to believe he's dead!).

4. Finally, team Spidey with Marvel's newest super-team, the Thunderbolts!

Until Marvel stops marveling with marvelous Marvel mags, Make Mine Marvel!

Brian Corvello
1720 East Monte Vista
Phoenix, AZ 85006

Thanks for the kind words, there, Brian! However, we feel compelled to point one thing out: we never confirmed that it was a baby you saw in ish #422 (that ought to keep 'em guessing!). As for your humble requests:

1. Okay, that makes three. Oh, what the heck! Let's just bring her back already! How does this very issue sound?

2. Well, you certainly have eclectic tastes in villains! Can't speak for the rest, but you did catch Carlos Lobo in SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN '97, didn't you?

3. Believe it.

4. We did—in SPIDER-MAN TEAM-UP #7. Off to the back issue bins with ye!

Dear *Spider's Web*,

I've always hated Electro. He's always been one of Spidey's more two-dimensional villains, with no real motivation behind him. Electro would commit a crime. Spidey would swing in, kick him around a little, all pretty cut and dried. But you guys have done what I thought to be impossible: you made him human. You've taken someone who could be Spidey's most half-baked villain (except for the Kangaroo, of course) and given him depth. It's kind of ironic that even though Max Dillon's dad beat his mother and him, in the end it was Max's mom who did the most damage to him by being overprotective and planting the seed of doubt in him. Otherwise, Max could have grown up to be successful in his life and career. Hmm. I suppose this is a perfect example of how "you always hurt the ones you love."

I'm glad to see you guys haven't forgotten about Phil Urich. He's a good character and would make an excellent friend for Peter. Please keep him around.

Little May is alive! Hallelujah! Give her back to Pete and MJ real soon. After all they've gone through, they at least deserve their daughter.

This was the best Spidey story I've read in quite a while, and I hope you'll keep future issues up to this kind of quality. My only qualm is that you guys passed on a perfect opportunity to update Electro's costume (another aspect of him that I never really liked). People do the strangest things....

Michael Ferraro
(Address withheld by request)
P.S. Bring Back Stunner!

Yes, indeed, it looks like Phil Urich will be sticking his slacker head into this mag from time to time. And can you blame Two-fisted Tom DeFalco? He created him, after all! We wouldn't recommend any breath-holding for young Phil to jump back into the Goblin threads, though (as Brian suggested above). Norman would probably clean the city with that particular inexperienced hero!

Hellooooo *Spider's Web*,

I would first like to start off by giving praise to those responsible for all that is Spider-Man: I'm not worthy (bow), I'm not worthy (bow), I'm not worthy (bow). You people at Spider-Central have filled my life with great joy over the past seven years. Thank you very much!

Now, on to the other reason I wrote in. It appears that Norman Osborn is back in Peter's life. It would also appear that Peter will soon receive the news that his daughter did indeed survive! I first thought of this theory after reading AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #418. Why would anyone bother taking the corpse of Peter and Mary Jane's baby? It does not make sense on its own unless it serves a greater purpose. The same woman appears in AMAZING #422 on a boat with a mystery child in a crib. I don't know, is this possible or am I just reaching for thin air? Well, as you know, this letter cannot end without the traditional questions. So, on my mark...get set...here they come:

1. If the baby did survive, then does Norman know about this? If not, does Alison Mongrain intend to use this as leverage against Norman?

2. The Kingpin has recently appeared in X-MEN #63. Could this mean a possible X-Men/Spider-Man encounter in the near future?

3. Could Vulture, Mysterio, and Sandman be making comebacks soon since the other three members of the Sinister Six have reappeared (Dr. Octopus doesn't count)?

4. Could you please give me a brief explanation as to when and how Spidey's powers became so unreliable?

5. Last, but not least, could you tell me where Spider-Man ranks in the Marvel Universe?

I hope I didn't take up too much of your time writing so much, but I couldn't help myself. Thanks again for the excellent work.

Jose G. Ramirez
1222 Elm Avenue #306
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Oh, yes, it certainly is more than fair to say that Norman is "back in Peter's life." If you want to see just how much, then you have absolutely no excuse for not picking up SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #250, just a mere two weeks from now!

Now, you said something about questions...

1. Nottellingnottellingnottelling.

2. Well, Spidey did just pop up in UNCANNY X-MEN #346, but Wilson Fisk was nowhere to be found. Hey, what gives? Never fear, though, you'll get you fill of Mr. Fisk in a special KINGPIN one-shot bookshelf edition we're cooking up for the fall. It will be written by none other than Stan "The Man" Lee, and drawn by the incomparable John Romita, Sr.!

3. Okay, real quickly now: Vulture was recently re-aged in SENSATIONAL #18, and the Sandman teams with Spidey in MARVEL TEAM-UP #3 in September. Doc Ock doesn't count, you say? Too bad, because, as we announce here for the very first time, he also will be making a return in the epic AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #427! Look for it on the stands in...oh, wait a minute...

4. Sure! Morbius bit him in the neck and now he gets all woogie from time to time.

5. Number one in our book!

Hey guys,

There are plenty of writers who can write Spider-Man well. How many of them can go the extra mile and write the villains well, too? Tom DeFalco, there's one. In AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #422 Mr. DeFalco adds some much-needed depth to Electro, making us humble readers even more interested in his upcoming confrontation with Spidey.

It's hard to believe that classic Spidey villains like Dr. Octopus, the Chameleon, and now Electro, have had some of their best stories told, over 30 years after their creation, but it's happening. (And check out UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN #20 for similar treatment of the Vulture.) Who's next? Shocker? The Scorpion? The Gibbon?

Marcus Hiltz
P.O. Box 39
Keene, NH 03431

Well, we didn't exactly "revamp" the Gibbon, but he did make some...uh, memorable appearances in recent issues of SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN as a member of the Legion of Losers. Hope you didn't miss it!

Dear Web-heads,

Spider-Man has the most impressive rogues' gallery in the Marvel Universe. Heck, aside from a certain wealthy Gothamite, Spider-Man has the most impressive rogues' gallery in comicdom. That having been said, I wanted to compliment you in your effort to re-establish Electro as a force to be reckoned with in Spider-Man's life.

You brought back the original Green Goblin (quite impressively, by the way) and you have given Electro a new lease on life. How about returning some of the original great villains? Do the names Dr. Octopus and Kraven ring a bell?

Frank Hinton
P.O. Box 5641
Petaluma, CA 94955

They certainly do, Frank! By now, you have satisfaction on the Doc Ock issue. As for that other guy, you'll have to keep reading SPECTACULAR (you are reading it each month, aren't you?), where...something...is going on with Kraven.

Dear Spider-Men,

First off, I would like to congratulate you guys on a job well done. At first I was a little upset at the departure of Mark Bagley. I thought that no one could hold a candle to his amazing artwork. But I'll be the first to admit that Steve Skroce has certainly made up for the loss of Bagley. His art is fresh and entertaining. Also, Tom DeFalco is doing an amazing (not to mention sensational and spectacular) job of writing this book. His stories are all superb!

Okay, now that I'm through praising the staff, I'd like to make a few comments.

First, I would like to take a crack at the identity of the Jack O'Lantern. From the way he's been stalking Jameson and his son, I'd have to say that he's none other than...Jacob Conover!!!

Why, you ask? C'mon, isn't it pretty obvious? Back in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #416, when he was downsized from the Daily Bugle, he was pretty furious. I seem to recall him saying that he'd teach Robbie and that penny-pinching publisher the true meaning of sorrow. So, pretty fair guess, huh? Am I right?

Also, I have to thank you for bringing back Electro with #422. That's great! I haven't been fortunate enough to have many comics featuring him, but I always thought he was pretty cool.

Now, for the questions corner of the web:

1. What did Peter tell the guys at the Daily Grind about Ben's death? On that note, I would really be interested in keeping up with the Grind cast. How about it?

2. Will you bring back Spidercide? I thought he was really cool. Last I checked, in MAXIMUM CLONAGE OMEGA, they never said he was dead. They just had him in a stasis chamber until they determined whether or not he was a threat anymore.

3. Will you have Carnage in these pages soon? I would love to see Skroce's version of everybody's favorite maniacal serial killer.

4. Am I the only one who realizes that Norman Osborn kidnapped the baby and turned her over to that Alison Mongrain witch?

5. I would like to see Skroce's Venom for that matter, too.

6. Will the Robot Master be back? Did Osborn kill him?

7. And last but not least...the Green Goblin's still alive, right?

Jonathan Bradshaw
2967 Grimsley Farm Road
Bladeboro, NC 28320

Interesting theory about the Jack O'Lantern, Jonathan. And if everyone promises not to tell anyone who reads SPECTACULAR, we can reveal to you here and now that the Jack O'Lantern is really...gotcha! Tee-hee.

Questions, questions, questions:

1. Peter didn't tell them anything. Shirley and Devon Washington had the unfortunate experience of witnessing Ben's death in PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #75.

2. Let's put it this way, Jonathan. There are innumerable villains in various forms of containment as we speak. When they escape and start causing havoc is only a matter of time.

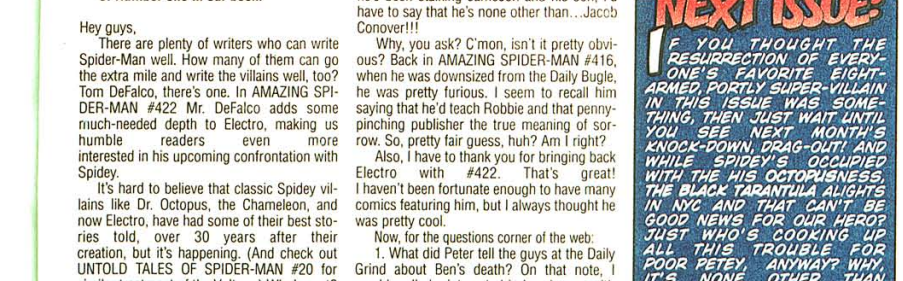
3. So would we, now that you mention it.

4. We can neither confirm or deny.

5. How about Tom Lyle's version, in December's ultimate showdown special between Spidey and the big-mouthed one?

6. The Robot Master's contract allows for only one storyline every 30 years, so sit tight. You've got a bit of a wait.

7. Oh, boy, is he ever! As we mentioned above, hie your way over to SPECTACULAR #250 to witness this guy's seething malice. Is he just plain evil, or what?



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AND THE FANTASTIC FOUR MARK THE END OF A UNIVERSE?

DISCOVER THE TRUTH THIS SEPTEMBER

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BULLPEN BULLETINS

AVAILABLE AUGUST 20

STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE
SISKO and DAX – trapped on an alien space station in its final moments. But it's only a Holodeck illusion! They can't possibly be hurt... or can they? By HOWARD WEINSTEIN and TOM GRINDBERG! *11

STAR TREK: STARFLEET ACADEMY
The cadets are on trial for breaking Starfleet law! They're gonna need some surprise witnesses, like CHRISTOPHER PIKE, SPOCK and PICARD! By CHRIS COOPER and JOHN ROYLE! *11

PSYLOCKE & ARCHANGEL: CRIMSON DAWN
The ULTIMATE UNDERCLOAK is closing in on PSYLOCKE! This is a job for the mystical mite known as GOMURR! By BEN RAAB and SALVADOR LARROCA! *3 of 4

WHAT IF?!
What if ARCHANGEL had remained a HORSEMAN of APOCALYPSE? Featuring the original X-FACTOR lineup, including THE BEAST, ICEMAN, CYCLOPS and MARVEL GIRL! By JOHNNY GREENE, BILL ROSEMANN and FRED HAYNES! *101

X-MAN
A child's telepathic distress call leads to one of the deadliest mutants of all! Plus: NATE GREY is having nightmares of the X-MEN! (He must've thrown away his back issues!) By MARK BERNARDO and RICK LEONARDI! *31

X-MEN
You'll be chilled to the marrow as ICEMAN and MARROW search for the mystery woman who could destroy BASTION! By SCOTT LOBDELL and CARLOS PACHECO! *68

COLOSSUS
EXCALIBUR's own COLOSSUS and MEGGAN arrive in Paris, only to become trapped in MURDERWORLD! Now, Colossus must kill ARCADE or die himself! A 48-page one-shot! By BEN RAAB and BRYAN HITCH! *1

EXCALIBUR
Read this before the COLOSSUS one-shot! COLOSSUS and MEGGAN head for WUNDAGORE (aren't they the world-class travelers?)! Plus: a horrendous fate befalls one of the team! By BEN RAAB and PETE WOODS! *113

PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN
There's a new player in the gang war – the unstoppable JUGGERNAUT! We're not sure whose side he's on, but our money's on JUGGIE! By HOWARD MACKIE and JOHN ROMITA, JR.! *84

SQUADRON SUPREME
Re-presenting the classic story about the super heroes who took over the world! With a painted cover by superstar ALEX ROSS! By MARK GRUENWALD, PAUL RYAN, JOHN BUSCEMA, and BOB HALL! TPB

THUNDERBOLTS
CITIZEN V wants the city of New York to turn over the AVENGERS' files! And he can be a very bad citizen when he wants to! By KURT BUSIEK and MARK BAGLEY! *7

DR. STRANGE: WHAT IS IT THAT DISTURBS YOU, STEPHEN?
DOCTOR STRANGE is seduced by a mad sorceress named ELECTRA – no, it's not who you think! By P. CRAIG RUSSELL and MARK ANDREYKO! *1

HEROES FOR HIRE
The battle you thought you'd never see: POWER MAN vs. IRON FIST! Could the CONTROLLER have something to do with this? Well, possibly! By JOHN OSTRANDER and PASCUAL FERRY! *4

INCREDIBLE HULK
The battle you just knew you'd see: HULK vs. JUGGERNAUT! But the HULK is stronger than ever, thanks to his new pal... APOCALYPSE! By PETER DAVID and DAVID BREWER! *457

IRON MAN
IRON MAN must team up with DR. DOOM to fight GALACTUS! The story so big, it takes 48 pulse-pounding pages to tell it! By JIM LEE, JEPH LOEB and RYAN BENJAMIN! *12

ITEM! A few months back, we unveiled our fabulous new gatefold covers on all our mags – and they've attracted some major media attention! USA Today ran an article about our new cover format when it debuted, and in mid-June, a crew from the FX television network came in to ask us all about it! As you undoubtedly know by now, our fold-out "Guide To the Marvel Universe" offers you a who's who of heroes and villains in each mag, as well as a peek at what you may have missed in last month's ish! Everyone seems to appreciate our helpful and fun way of filling you in on what has gone before! We always said you'd need a scorecard to tell the players in our mags – now you've got one in every issue!

MARVEL ONLINE CHAT SCHEDULE FOR THIS WEEK:

8/13/97- Writer JOHN OSTRANDER and Editor MARK BERNARDO (HEROES FOR HIRE) 8 PM - 9 PM EST

8/14/97- Writer KURT BUSIEK and Editor TOM BREVOORT (THUNDERBOLTS) 9:30 PM - 10:30 PM EST

8/15/97- Assistant Editor JASON WHITE (X-FACTOR, X-MEN UNLIMITED) 4 PM - 5 PM EST

8/18/97- Legendary Artist JOHN ROMITA, SR. (SPIDER-MAN) 8 PM - 9 PM EST

8/19/97- Writer BEN RAAB (EXCALIBUR, CRIMSON DAWN) 8 PM - 9 PM EST

Assistant Editor/Writer GLENN GREENBERG (SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC) 9 PM - 10 PM EST

Please note that all chat schedules are subject to change/cancellation. Just go to Marvel on America Online (Keyword: Marvel) for up-to-the-minute scheduling!

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MARVEL ONLINE (avail. AUGUST 20)

SPIDER-MAN CYBERCOMIC STORYLINE

*13 Part Four! SPIDER-MAN takes on his old enemy, THE HEADSMAN, as the life of LIZ OSBORN hangs in the balance! By GLENN GREENBERG, PAT CHAU and ATOMIC PAINTBRUSH!

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CREATOR PROFILE: JOHN OSTRANDER

Need to hire a hero? JOHN OSTRANDER is the man to call! He's the writer for our all-new HEROES FOR HIRE series! We asked this writer for hire a few questions about how he got ahold of the unlisted number for LUKE CAGE and Co.! (And, even more importantly, are the Heroes for Hire available for yardwork?)

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT HEROES FOR HIRE? It's unlike anything else I've written. I'm having loads of fun with it. I'm trying to make the electricity level real high. It's a real fun ride.

IS THERE A ROTATING CAST OF CHARACTERS IN THE BOOK? Yes. There is a solid core to the group, and then guest stars who rotate in and out. Our guest stars could technically come from anywhere in the Marvel Universe.

WHO ARE THE CORE HEROES? LUKE CAGE (POWER MAN), IRON FIST, the BLACK KNIGHT and the new WHITE TIGER (who's female). Each member has their own agenda for being on the team. There is a mystery for each one of them.

YOU MEAN THEY'RE NOT JUST OUT TO MAKE A BUCK? They're not just mercenaries. I don't want to focus on the "for hire" as much as I do the "heroes."

WHO ARE SOME OF THE GUEST STARS WHO SHOW UP IN THE BOOK? The HULK is in the first issue, HERCULES is in it for a while...

DIDN'T ROGER STERN WORK ON THE FIRST ISSUE? Yeah. Actually, what happened was, Roger Stern created the whole thing, but then he had to bow out, and he suggested that I replace him. THE PUNISHER had just been cancelled, and MARK BERNARDO, who was the editor of that, was also editing HEROES FOR HIRE. He had no problems working with me. Roger Stern basically plotted the first issue and I basically scripted it. My friend Joe Edkin assisted me.

WHO ARE SOME OF THE VILLAINS WHO WILL BE SHOWING UP IN THE BOOK? The U-FOES, THE CONTROLLER, the MASTER OF THE WORLD – he'll be a continuing heavyweight for us. ORKA, SHOCKWAVE, WHIPLASH, KILLER SHRIKE, NITRO.

IF YOU COULD ONLY HIRE ONE HERO, WHICH ONE WOULD YOU HIRE? Probably IRON MAN, because he has the most flexibility for the most types of work. If I lived in the Marvel Universe, I'd know he was for hire, because he works as a bodyguard.

HOW DO YOU LIKE THE ART OF PASCUAL FERRY? He has enormous enthusiasm. I'm throwing all kinds of different things at him – issue #2 takes place on the mystic Isle of AVALON. Pascual has a nice range of ability.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST TO HIRE A HERO? As little as a dollar! It's a sliding fee based on the client's ability to pay.

WHO ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE WRITERS? I like some of Robert Parker's Spenser novels... Shakespeare... Barbara Tuchman – she's a historian. Raymond Chandler. Dashiell Hammett.

HOW ABOUT COMIC BOOK WRITERS? Certainly STAN LEE – the way he would start his plots in the middle of the action. With HEROES FOR HIRE, I'm trying to be Stan Lee on extra caffeine! PETER DAVID is one of the best in the business. He took a character I found stagnant – the Hulk – and showed that you can do so many different things with him. MARK GRUENWALD did some wonderful things – I'm glad they're reprinting SQUADRON SUPREME.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED WRITING COMICS? I come from a theater background. In the early eighties, a friend of mine was starting up a comic book company. He knew of my work as a playwright, and knew of my interest in comics. He gave me a shot, and I've never looked back. I've been doing it for about fifteen years now.

STAN'S SOAPBOX!

Hi, Heroes!

Look, before we begin, I wanna apologize to the hundreds of you whose letters haven't yet been printed. The powers-that-be won't allow me more than this one measly column, except for once every month, when they break their heart and give me a full page over in our 40-page titles. But don't despair, Frantic Ones, sooner or later I'll get us a whole issue of nothing but letters – I mean, who wants comics when you can read Soapboxes instead?!

But now, on to the good stuff. Mitch Horn of Brooklyn, NY asks:

"Do you think Dr. Doom served as an inspiration to George Lucas when he created Darth Vader?"

Hey, Mitch, my world-famous modesty compels me to deny it, but now that you mention it, there does seem to be a slight resemblance!

Brad Shirakawa of Hollister, CA is pantin' to learn:

"How doth us mere mortals go about joining the Merry Marvel Marching Society (again!)?"

Y'know, we discontinued the good ol' MMMS years ago – and it was a real bonehead decision! First chance we get, I'll form it again – and when you see it advertised, Brad, remind us of your letter and you can be a charter member! Wow! A No-Prize and a potential Charter Membership at one time! Truly the Hosts of Hoggoth have favored thee this day!

And Robert Menzies in far-off Glasgow, Scotland (though it's not far off to him!) tosses in this poser:

"I heard you never regretted what other writers have done with your characters, except once – the killing of Gwen Stacy. Is that true?"

I admit it, Bob, I didn't like the idea. Since we had killed her father, Captain Stacy, in an earlier issue, it looked like we were conducting a vendetta against the whole family! They're only fictional characters (at least I think so!), but Gwen's death really shook me up! I better quit now – I'm getting all misty eyed again!

Keep those questions coming, gang. Even though we can't print them all, I read each and every one. (At least it keeps me off the streets!) So, till our next swingin' session –

Excelsior!

Stan

Stan Lee

Remember, the address is "Stan's Soapbox," c/o BULLPEN BULLETINS, Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016 – an address that will live in infamy!

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Whatever knows fear burns at the Man-Thing's touch.

MAN-THING

The answer begins with Ted Sallis...
On the night he was betrayed and moments before he was transformed.
Driven to escape his pursuers...
And forced to test the experimental Super Soldier Formula on himself...
he never learned even a hint of why he was transformed into the
empathic watchmen of the Nexus of All Realities.

THERE ARE DARK ROOMS WITHIN THE HOUSE OF IDEAS.
MARVEL'S ABOUT TO EXPOSE YOU TO TWO NEW SERIES OF THE MACABRE...

The Moon is not dead.
And neither is its champion.

MOON KNIGHT

He lies dormant, eclipsed from a world without heroes...
a world where darkness engulfs the light...
a world of perpetual night.

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But the truth is not out there.
The truth is buried within...
in his rot-infested sinkhole body and soul.
For the answers to those questions that gnaw and eat away at
the little that's left of Sallis' mind are unsatisfied... and hungry.

CHAMBERS OF DARKNESS...THE DEAD OF NIGHT...
WHERE MONSTERS PROWL... CREATURES ON THE LOOSE.

A world of Dream Demons and
Mercenary Bushmen and Werewolves.
Where one man alone cannot stop their dread advance.

But Moon Knight is not one man.
He is Marc Spector. And Steven Grant. And Jake Lockley.

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And now, Ted Sallis will learn... of the betrayal of his wife... and of the fractured Nexus that threatens all that is... he must rebuild what has been shattered if he would be whole again... and so he will dig and scrape and tear through the primordial goop that made him those many years before...
... he will uncover the truth that smolders within him. He will burn at its touch. And he will be afraid.
MAN-THING
Monthly from J.M. DeMatteis and Liam Sharp
A WHOLE NEW ERA IN THE BATTLE AGAINST ALL THAT'S UNHOLY...
Four phases of the same man. A fallen man in the war against the darkness.
But understand now that the tide of battle is about to turn... for surely the moon controls the tides.
And the moon has always been a light in the darkness.
MOON KNIGHT
4 Issue Limited Series by Doug Moench, Tommy Lee Edwards and Robert Campanella
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THE DOCTOR IS IN!
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The Nabisco Thing

This is a story about me. My name is Desi. I'm just a normal kid, I guess.

I do Ok in school. I play shortstop and I rule the arcade. Anyway, before you say "Get on with it, dude," I'll tell you what happened to me. The other day my stomach was screaming for some snacks.

So I grabbed my discs of delight. And on the Oreo bag was my entry form for the Nabisco Thing Cool Bus Contest.

THE NABISCO THING COOL BUS

it's a TIGER TOY AVALANCHE!

CONTEST!!!

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Cool Bus contest

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www.nabiscokids.com

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